

MINUTES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

November 6, 2014

**MSU Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health
4125 Beaumont Road, Lansing, MI 48910**

Present for the Natural Resources Commission

J. R. Richardson, chairman
John Matonich, vice chairman
Vicki Pontz

Absent

Louise Klarr
Rex Schlaybaugh, Jr.
Tim Nichols

Present for DNR Staff

Keith Creagh, DNR director
William E. Moritz, DNR natural resources deputy
Peter Manning, legal counsel, Office of the Attorney General
Cheryl Nelson, executive assistant to the NRC
Other department staff

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chairman **J.R. Richardson** called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Richardson introduced **Emily Butcko** as a member of the Youth Conservation Council and presented her with a certificate of appreciation.

Silver Lake State Park Voucher Reservations Parks and Recreation chief **Ron Olson** and **Charlotte Keifer** talked about the development of a new reservation system at Silver Lake State Park. The department is creating an alternative to the current process of having off-road vehicle users sitting in line for long periods of time to get on the dunes. The plan is to move to an online and call-in system, similar to the current camping reservation system. They will only utilize this system for high use periods-weekends and holidays.

Olson also informed the commission about three parcels of land previously discussed that the department will be acquiring near Milliken State Park and Harbor, and the Outdoor Adventure Center in Detroit to enhance public recreation in the area.

DNR Scorecard Review **John Cherry** gave a presentation of the DNR scorecard, outlining some of the metrics and goals that it measures. The scorecard tracks the department's progress on the five specific department goals.

Results on Kalamazoo River eDNA Sampling Fisheries chief **Jim Dexter** informed the commission about the recent results from an additional round of environmental DNA testing on the Kalamazoo River. This additional testing followed an October announcement of a single positive eDNA result on the river for silver carp, a species of Asian carp. The additional sampling turned up no additional positive results for Asian carp eDNA samples. The department will continue to monitor the Kalamazoo River, with additional sampling scheduled to be done in the spring.

Request for Proposal on Invasive Species Grants **Sue Tangora** from the Wildlife division spoke about the recent request for proposals issued for invasive species grants. As provided for in this year's budget, the DNR, along with the departments of Environmental Quality and Agriculture and Rural Development, will issue a minimum of \$3.6 million in grants to detect, prevent, manage and eradicate invasive species on the ground and in the water. The proposals are due by December 5, with the recipients being announced in February.

Process for Wolf Plan Update **Adam Bump** talked about the update that is beginning for the department's 2008 Wolf Management Plan. **Bump** noted that there will not be any major revisions to the plan, but the process will update information on the biology of wolves and evaluate how the department has done in implementing the plan. The proposed revision should be available for review by the commission and approval by the director in March, 2015.

Deer Management Assistance Permit Pilot Program Update **Brent Rudolph** of the Wildlife division talked about the department's Deer Management Assistance Permit pilot program. He noted that the decision tree is being used by staff to evaluate on a case by case basis. **Rudolph** also noted that to date, only 1 buck has been taken and they are not hearing much shooting.

Forestry Updates Forestry division chief **Bill O'Neill** reported to the commission on timber sales. The department this year prepared 62,000 acres of state-managed public forest land for timber sales, the second highest acreage prepared since 2000. This was in keeping with what the Timber Advisory Council identified as a sustainable number of acres for harvest. Revenue from timber sales this fiscal year totaled more than \$46 million, compared to \$38 million in timber sales for the immediate past fiscal year. A recent Michigan State University study values Michigan's forest products industry at an estimated \$16 billion annually. The goal of the

department is to help the state's forest products industry to reach \$20 billion annually within five years.

O'Neill also mentioned the ICC Biomass committee, and how biomass can play a role in a power switch in the UP. They are also looking at a state policy that might help the biomass market in Michigan.

Preliminary Update on October 29 Oil and Gas Lease Auction Minerals Management supervisor **Mary Uptigrove** talked about the department's October 29 Oil and Gas Lease Auction. The department leased nearly 153,000 acres, with more than \$2.9 million raised in bonus and rent. They are planning to hold a similar auction in May 2015.

Island Lake Minerals Auction Update **Uptigrove** also provided an update on the partnership between Minerals Management and the Parks and Recreation division to come up with a way to reclaim the old sand and gravel pit at Island Lake. This was conducted through a sealed auction, a committee was involved and they are looking at the 3 proposals submitted. They will have 30 days to review proposals. The criteria they are looking at include getting in and out quickly-within 15 years, how to continue to provide public access while working on the site as well as the royalty rates.

Graymont Update Real Estate section supervisor **Steve Sutton** talked about a revised proposal from Graymont, Inc., for limestone mining on acreage in northern Mackinac county near the UP community of Rexton. In comparison to an earlier Graymont proposal, the revised application significantly reduces the amount of public land the company proposes to buy. In addition, the application gives for the first time a proposed valuation for the limestone to be mined. Under the application, Graymont would pay the state 18.75 cents for each ton of extracted limestone. Royalties from the mining would be deposited into the State Parks Endowment Fund.

National Wild Turkey Federation Partner Presentation – Turkey Patch **Al Stewart** from the Wildlife division and **Tony Snyder** from the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) were present at the commission meeting to recognize the student who won the turkey patch design contest. **Snyder** shared a brief history about the turkey patch program. Students from around the state submit their design entries to MSU and NWTF, with the winning design becoming next year's patch. **Phoebe Talaga** from Lake Orion High School designed the winning patch for 2015.

Legislative Report **Trevor VanDyke**, Legislative and Legal Affairs Office Director, provided a written report of legislation introduced related to the DNR. In addition to the written report, **VanDyke** provided updates on recent legislation and the recent election.

Partners in Conservation Award The department and the commission presented a Partners in Conservation Award to **Frank Mortl**, past president and CEO of the Michigan Oil and Gas Association. **Mortl**, who served at the Michigan Oil and Gas Association for 43 years, was instrumental in the formation of the Natural Resources Trust fund in the 1970s.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Chauncey J. Moran came to discuss a 40 acre parcel of land in UP that is a non-developmental lease. He does not think there should be project expansion allowed by Lundin until they have exhibited how they are going to continue without any pollution to the lakes and streams in the area. He is asking the commission, director, and Forest Resources, Minerals, Fisheries, and Wildlife divisions who have signed on to the restricted development of the parcel to rethink development by the Yellow Dog River. Director **Creagh** commented that he would have staff take a look into this.

Greg Wehler came before the NRC to ask the commission and the director take action on getting state-licensed commercial trap net fisheries to post net locations on the DNR website, so the public can easily find these net locations. He is not against commercial fishing, he would just like to be able to know where the nets are located. Chief **Dexter** commented that there must be legislative authority for requiring reporting of net locations; the DNR and the NRC do not have that authority. The Legislature would have to create a statute for those locations to be posted online.

Dale Hendershot was present before the commission to talk about using #3 and #4 buckshot at night for predator hunting. He noted that he recently attended a meeting that was well-received with assistant chief **Molnar** of the Law Enforcement division and commissioner **Matonich**.

Hendershot wants to make sure people know what is legal and what ammunition is available. **Matonich** adds this issue has been around for a number of months and that these shot sizes are commercially available and are reasonably priced. They are still in the process of getting information on what our neighboring states allow. Once this information is received, **Matonich** will get with the Wildlife and Fisheries Committee and move forward.

Chairman Richardson adjourned the public appearances portion of the meeting at 3:20 p.m. and called to order the regular meeting of the NRC at 3:20 p.m. He noted that all commissioners who were present at the Committee of the Whole were present for the regular meeting.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS

Richardson noted as there was not a quorum of the commission, they will not act on the NRC action items until the December NRC meeting.

DIRECTOR – ACTION ITEMS

Director **Creagh** listed the “Director’s Action” items listed on the agenda and indicated he would approve all items.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

NRC Marketing, Partnership, Youth Outreach and Outreach Committee

Matonich gave an update and discussed license sales, where they are year to date. There was also a report on the fishing program with MEDC. He noted that **Al Stewart** did a tremendous job working with outdoor writers.

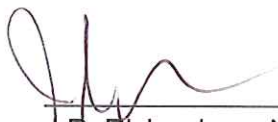
Next Meeting

Chairman **Richardson** announced that the next regular meeting of the NRC is scheduled for Thursday, December 11, 2014 at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing, MI 18933. Committees meeting in December will be the NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries and the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee.

Adjournment

Commissioner **Matonich** made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner **Pontz** seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

APPROVED: Date: 12/11/14



J.R. Richardson, NRC Chairman

Keith Creagh, DNR Director